

Felix Goldberg 1

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Felix and Bluma Goldberg are two of Columbia's six remaining Holocaust survivors. Felix Goldberg will blow the shofar, or ram's horn, at tonight's ceremony to remember the Holocaust.

Holocaust survivor to tell his story in service tonight

■ Yom Hashoah observance will include march with show of candlelight

By ALLISON ASKINS
Staff Writer

When the lighted candles begin to appear along Trenholm Road tonight, Bluma and Felix Goldberg will give thanks.

Thanks that their lives have been so full and thanks that their neighbors are willing to stand on a public thor-

oughfare to demonstrate their compassion.

The show of candlelight is part of the solemn march held in Columbia each year during the community's Yom Hashoah observance. Yom Hashoah is the day on which Jews around the world remember the 6 million Jews exterminated by the Nazis during World War II.

Felix Goldberg, 83, and Bluma Goldberg, 73, are two of Columbia's six Holocaust survivors. Felix Goldberg, who survived the Buchenwald concentration camp, will speak at the

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memorial service at 7 tonight, after the march. Bluma Goldberg, a survivor of the Bergen-Belzen camp, had the heart-wrenching task in 1996.

"I know that they're hearing it every year. But you still have to remind people," says Felix Goldberg, who came to this country in 1950 speaking no English. He persevered to build a successful tile business.

"In a way," Bluma Goldberg says, "we fear that maybe that's why we survived — so we can tell the story."

The Goldbergs have come to be known for generously sharing their stories. They hid nothing from their three children, Henry, Carl and Esther; they willingly speak in schools; and their experience is part of the archives of the Steven Spielberg Foundation.

"Felix Goldberg and his wife, Bluma, have been constant sources of first-hand information to a generation of children who have difficulty understanding how close this truly was in our human history," explains Steve Turner, executive director of the Columbia Jewish Federation, sponsor of tonight's observance.

Bluma Goldberg recalls that her children knew instinctively that something was unusual about a family that

didn't have grandparents or any remnants of grandparents' lives. Each of Bluma and Felix Goldberg's parents died during the Holocaust.

"We talked to them as soon as they were old enough to understand," she says.

Felix's last memory of his parents and grandparents in his native Poland is embedded in an image of police officers in his home, separating the men and women.

"My grandfather was shot and killed as he chased after my grandmother," he recalls.

Also a native of Poland, Bluma recalls her mother stuffing money into her older sister's pocket, pushing the two girls out of the house and urging them to run away and hide.

"We ran into the woods and never, never saw our family again," Bluma Goldberg wrote in her 1996 Yom Hashoah speech. "It was an amazing thing. Can you imagine ... Nazis rushing into this temple with guns, and the little children having to run to the woods for their lives?"

As tonight's service comes to a close, Felix Goldberg will blow the shofar, or ram's horn, in a tone that will resemble an agonized wail.

The haunting sound will bring a solemn day to a close — only this year there will be fewer survivors like the Goldbergs present than ever be-

Today's Yom Hashoah observances

■ 2 p.m.: Memorial service at Daniel Circle Chapel at Fort Jackson.

■ 6 p.m.: Silent march begins at Beth Shalom Synagogue, 5827 N. Trenholm Road. Marchers progress to the Tree of Life congregation. Fort Jackson Color Guard leads procession.

■ 7 p.m.: Service of Remembrance, Tree of Life congregation, 6719 N. Trenholm. Church or work clothes required.

■ Free memorial candles are available at the Jewish Community Center, 4540 Trenholm Road, until 5 p.m.

fore.

Two survivors died in the past year. Columbia businessman Ben Stern, who was Felix Goldberg's best friend, died Dec. 6. And Bluma's older sister, Cela Miller, died last month.

"It will be a hard night, but something that has to be done," Felix Goldberg says. "Something that has to be told."

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